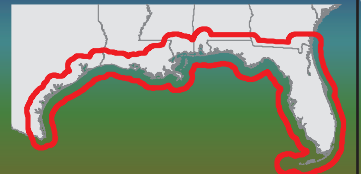




Gulf Coast
Ecosystem
Restoration
Council

Gulf-wide Foundational Investment

Council Monitoring and Assessment Program Development
(DOC_RESTORE_002_001_Cat1)



Project Name: Council Monitoring & Assessment Program Development – Planning

Cost: Category 1: \$2,500,000

Responsible Council Member: Department of Commerce/National Oceanographic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA); and Department of the Interior/U.S. Geological Survey

Partnering Council Members: All, as part of Council Monitoring & Assessment Work Group

Project Details: The proposed monitoring and assessment program, administered jointly by NOAA and the U.S. Geological Survey, would fund the development of basic, foundational components for Gulf region-wide monitoring in order to measure beneficial impacts of investments in restoration. The program, in coordination with the Gulf of Mexico Alliance and through collaboration with the Gulf States, Federal, and local partners, academia, non-governmental organizations, and business and industry, would leverage existing resources, capacities, and expertise and build on existing monitoring data and programs. The program would also utilize a Community of Practice (CoP) in coordination with GOMA to gain substantial input from partners.

Activities: The Council Monitoring and Assessment Program would conduct an inventory and gap analysis of existing data and monitoring systems; develop and provide recommendations to the Council for common standards and protocols for monitoring; establish metrics needed to measure the influence of water quality and habitat restoration; establish baseline conditions; and provide recommendations to the Council on how to address gaps and future needs.

The minimum monitoring and assessment standards would be used to efficiently evaluate and report on the effectiveness of Council-selected restoration projects and programs; and assess progress towards reaching the Council's comprehensive ecosystem restoration goals and objectives.

The program would also support the Council in its yearly reporting requirements to Congress.

Environmental Benefits: The proposed program would enable the Council to achieve its mission of science-based comprehensive Gulf ecosystem restoration. This would include providing a program that supports the Council's decision making process that prioritizes management needs, selects and implements restoration actions, and measures the results of individual projects to determine progress and adjust course as needed. The program would be developed to provide information pertinent to individual projects as well as regional information for use in evaluating progress toward the Council's goal of comprehensive, Gulf-wide restoration.

Duration: Completion of the proposed Category 1 activities would take three years.

More information on this activity can be found in Appendix K. Gulf-wide; Unique Identifier: DOC_RESTORE_002_001_Cat1.